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ABSTRACT

In order to provide the best management model for the effective and efficient operation of community colleges, it is useful to look briefly at management theories. The three principle theories in use in corporate management are: (1) theory X, involving an autocratic supervisor allowing for minimal group influence; (2) theory Y, in which supervisory style is democratic allowing for a considerable degree of group decision making; and (3) theory Z, which may be called "pure" democracy, allowing for total group decision making and placing the supervisor in a rotational role with staff. Community college functioning contains elements of all three theories; for example, a department chair has a leadership role, and yet is part of a consensus body. While most business organizations are goal oriented, colleges tend to be more vague about their particular goals, giving them an unusual flexibility. Furthermore, the professional orientation of university faculty tends to undercut traditional norms of bureaucracy. Thus, a specific theory termed "organized anarchy" has been used to describe the functioning of colleges. The term derives from the combined elements of "the academic bureaucracy" (leader as hero), the "university as a political system" (leader as negotiator), and the "university collegium" (leader as first among equals). In fact, these theories mesh closely with X, Y, and Z, respectively. It seems that effective and efficient operation of community colleges should involve an eclectic meshing of various elements and models. (PAA)

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POLICY ISSUES AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE:

ESSAYS BY FELLOWS

IN THE MID-CAREER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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MODELS OF ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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How are our community colleges structured? What models of organization are found on our campuses? Which models will allow our community colleges to operate most effectively and efficiently? What does the future portend for community college organizational patterns? In order to answer these questions, first, let us turn to management theories developed in the corporate world and see how applicable they are to higher education.

Modern corporate management theory has focused on 3 styles in recent years - theory X, theory Y, and theory Z. The theory X, supervisory style is autocratic. The supervisor's authority is supreme and group influence is minimal. The leader "tells" the staff what is to be done, and does not attempt to "sell" an idea or "consult" or "join" with the staff in reaching a decision. The theory X supervisor assumes that individuals dislike work, are lazy, must be coerced and controlled through a system of punishment and rewards, shirk responsibility and place a high priority on security. This basic definition, enunciated by Douglas McGregor in The Human Side of Enterprise, has been discussed by various writers, including Peter Drucker (Management). [1]

The theory Y supervisory style is democratic. The supervisor encourages employees to participate in the decision-making process. The supervisor is classified as one who "consults" with his/her staff. The leader makes the decision but an atmosphere is created where objections may be voiced, and ideas are respected. A high level of participation exists in a theory Y setting.

The theory Y supervisor assumes that individuals like work, can exercise self-control, seek responsibility, can make good decisions, and obtain self-satisfaction through work and can enjoy it. Theory Y assumes that people

can use a high degree of imagination and use creativity to solve problems. Again, this definition was originally offered by Douglas McGregor in The Human Side of Enterprise. [2]

The theory Z supervisory style is what I define as "pure" democracy. It is participatory management. The theory Z supervisor is a "joiner" - the decision is made by the team. The supervisor blends in with the group, and the group's decision is what is important. In other words, there is little distinction between management and worker.

The theory Z supervisor believes employees are interdependent, function best in groups and will acknowledge that team work is important. Theory Z supervisors treat staff like family. Under theory Z employment is a lifetime guarantee. Everyone participates in decision making and duties are rotated. While theories X and Y deal primarily with the individual, theory Z focuses on the group. Theory Z, proposed by William Ouchi in his work - Theory Z - How American Business Can Meet The Japanese Challenge - stresses the importance of consensus and long range development of personnel. [3]

Upon closer examination of community college life, one can see elements of theories X, Y, and Z in operation, often in the same situation. In Chairing the Academic Department, Allan Tucker discusses the "paradoxical" nature of department chairpersons -

> The chairperson is a leader, yet is seldom given the scepter of undisputed authority. He or she is first among equals, but any strong coalition of these equals can severely restrict the chairperson's ability to lead. Deans and vice presidents look to chairpersons as those primarily responsible for shaping the department's future, yet faculty members regard themselves as the primary agents of change in department policies and procedures. The chairperson, then, is both a manager and a faculty colleague, an advisor and adviser, a soldier and captain, a drudge and a boss. [4]

Here we see that the department chair is expected to be a leader (theory X) but does not have undisputed authority (theories Y and Z). Tucker indicates that

the chair is "first among equals", but his actions may be curtailed (theories Y and Z). Yet, the chair is expected to "shape the department" (theory X). Tucker then discusses the role of department chair's in terms of family, which removes us from theories X and Y and connects us to the concepts of Ouchi in theory Z.

> The dean and vice president ... do not have to say good morning - every morning to their colleagues in the department ... they do not have to maintain a family relationship with their faculty members. The department chairperson, on the other hand, does ... This intimate relationship is not duplicated anywhere else in the college or university because no other academic unit takes on the ambience of a family, with its personal interaction, its daily sharing of common goals and interests ... and its concern for each member.[5]

At the same time the chairperson has to maintain a familial (theory Z) relationship with the faculty, the chairperson has to be a representative of the deans and president of the institution (theory X).

> Clearly, the chairperson must be an advocate for the department... But turnabout, as college deans are fond of saying, is fair play and sometimes the chairperson must be the advocate of the dean or the central administration ... The chairperson must be able to share the institution's perspective and try to implement even an unfavorable decision.[6]

Tucker's department chairperson has a "paradoxical" role to play because he/she is expected to perform according to theories X, Y, and Z; theories which do not necessarily have common elements. Examination of the functions of community college departments (or divisions) sheds further light on the elements of each theory in operation in any given situation.

Reappointment of non-tenured faculty often involves classroom evaluations by a "team" (theory Z) and by a dean (theory X). Promotion decisions may be based on the recommendation of a faculty "team" (theory Z) and on a separate statement by the dean (theory X). Tenure decisions are based, in part, on "team" evaluation (theory Z), but final determination rests with the community college's president (theory X). The awarding of tenure, in effect, means lifetime employment, in most cases. While the process to obtain tenure, reflects theories

X and Y, the actual receiving of tenure, matches one of theory Z's tenets - employment until retirement. Department meetings, curriculum committees and community college faculty senates may be equated to quality circles, which are closely associated with theory Z. Budgets may be developed with faculty input (theory Y), but final decisions are often made by the president (theory X).

Conflicts may develop on the community college campus due to the very fact that theories X, Y and Z are all operating, pulling the community colleges in different directions at the same time. For example, different segments of the community college family will reflect different perceptions of the same issue. It is conceivable that members of the community college faculty would like to see theory Z in operation - that decisions of the faculty senate, the promotion and sabbatical committees - are binding, since they represent "group" consensus. On the other hand, the community college administrators see the decisions of such groups as faculty senates and promotion committees as advisory in nature, and that the final decisions rest with the administration, based upon faculty input.

Second, factors from outside the community college will influence what management styles are employed. Even if theory Z was implemented at a community college, state politicians may override whatever "group consensus" was reached. The state might say that the community colleges must implement a certain policy. Theory X is being thrust upon a theory Y or Z setting. The community college cannot reach a consensus decision on whether or not to perform basic skills testing, sophomore assessment, or whether to accept a grant format. It must be done. The imposition of state mandates upon community college campuses may mute the debate over which management theory is most vital and may lead some to conclude that major decisions will employ theory X (the state mandates) and secondary decisions will use theories Y and Z (the community college department functions). However, I believe this conclusion may be too cynical because many of the decisions reached by using theories Y and Z involve day to day operations

which keep our community colleges functioning - (textbook selection, scheduling, etc). Furthermore, faculty contracts are often produced through a theory Y process - collective bargaining.

Before considering whether any of the 3 models described to this point will lead to the most effective and efficient method of administering community colleges one should consider if alternative organizational models exist for our community colleges. Writing in the ASHE Reader on Organization and Governance in Higher Education, J. Victor Baldridge et al discuss five characteristics of college and universities that distinguish them from other organizations, including business firms. First, there is goal ambiguity.

> Most organizations are goal oriented, and as a consequence they can build decision structures to reach their objectives... By contrast, colleges and universities have vague, ambiguous goals... They rarely have a single mission. On the contrary they often try to be all things to all people.[7]

Second, there is client service. Higher education is people oriented, and "academic organizations are people-processing institutions".[8] Third, there is problematic technology. Since colleges are people oriented, how does one devise a technology to deal with them? "If at times colleges and universities do not know clearly what they are trying to do, they often do not know how to do it either... It is hard to construct a simple technology for an organization dealing with people."[9] Fourth, there is professionalism. Baldridge indicates that professionalism tends to "undercut the traditional norms of a bureaucracy, rejecting its hierarchy, control structure, and management procedures."[10] Finally, there is environmental vulnerability. While colleges do not operate under free market conditions, neither are they "captives" of their environment.[11] Baldridge et al conclude that, based upon these 5 characteristics, the best model to describe higher education is "organized anarchy."[12]

Does "organized anarchy" fit the community college mold better than theories X, Y, and Z? Are there any similarities between the Baldridge model and the others?

According to Baldridge et al, "organized anarchy" includes elements of "the academic bureaucracy", the "university collegium" and the "university as a political system." Under the "academic bureaucracy" the leader is the "hero" - he/she holds much of the power. In the bureaucratic model, one finds the following features.

1. Competence is the criterion used for appointment.
2. Officials are appointed, not elected.
3. Salaries are fixed and paid directly by the organization, rather than determined in "free-fee" style.
4. Rank is recognized and respected.
5. The career is exclusive; no other work is done.
6. The style of life of the organization's members centers on the organization.
7. Security is present in a tenure system.
8. Personal and organizational property are separated. [13]

In the university collegium, the leader is first among equals. (See also Tucker's discussion). We find the "community of scholars". This model includes collegial decision making.

> This approach argues that academic decision making should not be like the hierarchical process in a bureaucracy. Instead there should be full participation of the academic community, especially the faculty. Under this concept the community of scholars would administer its own affairs, and bureaucratic officials would have little influence. [14]

Second, it incorporates the "professional authority" of the faculty. This authority "emphasizes" the professional's ability to make his own decisions and his need for freedom from organizational restraints. [15] Third, this model includes a utopian element. There have been calls to reconstitute the "academic community." "The collegial model functions more as a revolutionary ideology and a utopian projection than a description of actual governance processes at any university." [16]

In the "university as a political system " the leader is seen as a mediator, as a negotiator. The leader is not a "hero" nor is the leader "first among equals." Under this model, coalitions are formed to apply pressure on the

leaders. The model uses classic interest group theory, with a pluralistic, "fluid" participation of actors. Conflict is a necessary byproduct of the system. "It is not necessarily a symptom of breakdown in the academic community. In fact, conflict is a significant factor in promoting healthy organizational change." [17] Why does conflict develop in some instances and not in others? "This model insists that interest groups, powerful individuals, and bureaucratic processes are critical in drawing attention to some decisions rather than to others." [18]

According to Baldridge et al, "organized anarchy" contains elements of all 3 systems - bureaucratic, collegial and political. "What decisions and governance processes are to be found in an organized anarchy?... Each image is valid in some sense; each image helps complete the picture." [19]

Faculty associations reinforce the Baldridge et al construct since they tend to reflect all three elements of the "organized anarchy" system. The concept of collegiality is often upheld as the ideal by faculty associations. (This also relates to theory Z.) The reality is that faculty associations or unions operate in the political system through collective bargaining (theory Y) and very often view the administration as bureaucratic (theory X). As T.R. McConnell and Kenneth Mortimer state in Sharing Authority Effectively,

> The more militant faculty associations may be expected to try to substitute adversary relations for shared responsibilities. Unions are required by law as well as by internal political imperatives to be clearly independent of, if not, in more or less continuous contention with, the administration. [20]

What relationship exists between the business management theories X, Y, and Z and the organized anarchy of Baldridge et al? I believe one may correlate the theories. For example, the academic bureaucracy component of the anarchy model closely resembles the characteristics of theory X. In theory X the supervisor is autocratic. In the bureaucratic model, the leader is the "hero", who holds most of the power. The university collegium model resembles theory Z. The concept of

"participatory management" applies equally well in both systems. Finally, the university as political system meshes with theory Y. The university as political system employs interest group dynamics, a touchstone of current democratic theory, and the leader is seen as a negotiator. In theory Y, the supervisory style is characterized as democratic. Furthermore, the "organized anarchy" of Baldridge et al does much to explain the "paradoxical" nature of the department chair in Tucker's article. The paradox is caused by the fact that elements of theories X, Y, and Z (or of the academic bureaucracy, university collegium, and political system) are present in our community colleges at any given time or event.

Which of these models, permits the most effective and efficient functioning of our community colleges? Should changes be made in our organizational structures? I believe Baldridge, Tucker et al are on the right path - no one model is sufficient to explain community college organization. The bureaucratic (theory X) model would most likely be the most efficient, since decisions may be made and implemented quickly. Of course, the effectiveness of such decisions may be limited, since input from the various sectors of the community college community would not be considered, and the "professionals" referred to by Baldridge would not look favorably upon this model. On the other hand, the collegium (theory Z) model could lead to a most inefficient system, that might reach consensus after much time is spent deliberating.

The fact that our colleges have moved away from the collegium model to a point somewhere else on the spectrum, is reflected in the following statement made by Justice Brennan in his dissent in the Yeshiva University case -

> The Court's conclusion that the faculty's professional interests are indistinguishable from those of the administration is bottomed on an idealized model of collegial decision-making that is a vestige of the great medieval university. But the university of today bears little resemblance to the community of scholars of yesterday. Education has become big business and the task of operating the university

> enterprise has been transferred from the faculty to an autonomous administration, which faces the same pressures to cut costs and increase efficiencies that confront any large industrial organization. [21]

No one model will produce the most effective and efficient organization. An eclectic approach, using elements of those theories most appropriate for a particular community college, should be employed. The same model employed in two institutions, may be successful in one and a disaster in another. Fine tuning a particular model for a community college campus is a difficult task, one which may require more then applying "scientific" principles. The "atmosphere" at an institution may be strongly related to organizational effectiveness.

What does the future hold for models of organization at our community colleges? I believe environmental factors will have the most impact. Our environmental vulnerability, as Baldridge indicates, is increasing. Community colleges are not isolated from demographic trends (number of 18 year olds, aging population), funding from the state and county, and increased state reporting and testing requirements (basic skills, sophomore assessment). The impact of these environmental factors will be profound. They will lead to more, not less, anxiety at our community colleges as our priorities are shifted in a period of static, if not declining, resources.

The recent study on the future of the community colleges in the State of New Jersey also sheds some light on future direction in community college organization and governance. The recommendations made by the study panel include:

1. That the Board of Higher Education, in consultation with the Council of County Colleges, conduct a review of the statutes and regulations governing the county community colleges to examine the appropriate respective roles of the board of trustees and the president.

2. That the state revise its statutes to require that county community college trustees be appointed from each major political party in a county, creating a balanced, bipartisan body that will provide greater stability.

3. That the term of a chair of a board of trustees be limited to two years.[22]

These recommendations reflect the panel's unhappiness with at least one of the systems discussed in this paper - the community college "as a political system." Enhanced rules for the trustees and President will impact on future governance at the community college.

If the community colleges of today appear paradoxical and confusing in their organizational structures, perhaps, we should take some comfort in the words of Walt Whitman -

> Do I contradict myself?
> Very well then I contradict myself,
> (I am large, I contain multitudes).[23]

FOOTNOTES

1. Douglas McGregor, The Human Side of Enterprise (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), pp. 33-44.

2. Ibid., pp. 45-57.

3. William Ouchi, Theory Z: How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1981), pp. 11-37.

4. Allan Tucker, Chairing the Academic Department (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1981), p. 4.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid., pp. 19-20.

7. Victor J. Baldridge, and others, "Alternative Models of Governance in Higher Education," in ASHE Reader on Organization and Governance in Higher Education, ed. by Marvin W. Peterson (Lexington, Massachusetts: Ginn Press, 1984), pp. 11-12.

8. Ibid., p. 12.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., p. 13.

11. Ibid., p. 14.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., p. 17.

14. Ibid., p. 18.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid., p. 19.

17. Ibid., p. 20.

18. Ibid., p. 21.

19. Ibid., p. 27.

20. T.R. McConnell and Kenneth Mortimer, Sharing Authority Effectively (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978), p. 184.

21. N.L.R.B. v. Yeshiva University, 444 U.S. 702-703, 100 S. Ct. 856 (1980).

22. Panel to Study the Future Health and Vitality of the County Community Colleges in New Jersey, Report of the Panel, Building Partnerships: The Opportunities Ahead (Trenton, New Jersey: New Jersey Department of Higher Education, 1987), pp. 1-2.

23. Walt Whitman, Song of Myself, 50.

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